

have this on the books as law in time for our cotton participants in the United States to be able to function for their year 2015—in the cotton business you start early, you start in January and February, so it is very urgent. The legislation benefits everybody. All participants are in agreement.

The bottom line is that this legislation is about modernization. Our markets, as I said before, have become much more global. It is a technical correction. It will help our cotton farmers, our cotton producers, and those who have to hedge in the marketplace around the world, and it does not—does not—put our cotton industry in the United States at a disadvantage globally.

I certainly urge that we all accept this amendment and move forward with a very, very important part of American industry, the cotton industry.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As my colleague said, Mr. Speaker, every year, cotton farmers prepare their fields. Off the field they must prepare as well, hedging risk and protecting themselves from possible disaster with cotton futures contracts on U.S. commodity exchanges.

The Cotton Number 2 contract, which is a U.S.-regulated contract, is the benchmark contract for the entire United States cotton industry. However, recently, a wide range of cotton industry participants have recommended the development of a world cotton contract with delivery points inside and outside of the United States. This is in recognition of the global nature of today's cotton industry.

The 1916 Cotton Futures Act requires that all cotton futures contracts that are listed on the U.S. exchange must be classed by the USDA, regardless of where the cotton is being stored. This structure is outdated and does not recognize the global cotton trade that exists today.

H.R. 5810 would simply allow for cotton futures contracts to be offered on a U.S. exchange that is based off of the world market price. This bill would neither change the regulation of the current futures contracts nor the current USDA classing, which requires U.S. cotton be classed again by USDA personnel.

With these technical changes in H.R. 5810, a new cotton futures contract will be available in U.S. commodity markets.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5810. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5810.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### AUTHORIZATION FOR THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Affairs be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 5816) to extend the authorization for the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5816

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. EXTENSION AND TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.

The International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 is amended—

(1) in section 207(a) (22 U.S.C. 6435(a)), by striking “2014” and inserting “2015”; and

(2) in section 209 (22 U.S.C. 6436), by striking “September 30, 2014” and inserting “September 30, 2015”.

#### SEC. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by this Act shall take effect as if enacted on December 10, 2014.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### DENOUNCING USE OF CIVILIANS AS HUMAN SHIELDS BY HAMAS AND OTHER TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 107) denouncing the use of civilians as human shields by Hamas and other terrorist organizations in violation of international humanitarian law, with Senate amendments thereto, and concur in the Senate amendments.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendments.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments:

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

*Whereas the use of human shields is unconscionable and morally unacceptable;*

*Whereas since June 15, 2014, there have been over 2,000 rockets fired by Hamas and other terrorist organizations from Gaza into Israel;*

*Whereas Hamas uses civilian populations as human shields by placing their missile batteries in densely populated areas and near schools, hospitals, and mosques;*

*Whereas Israel dropped leaflets, made announcements, placed phone calls, and sent text messages to the Palestinian people in Gaza warning them in advance that an attack was*

*imminent, and went to extraordinary lengths to target only terrorist actors and to minimize collateral damage;*

*Whereas Hamas urged the residents of Gaza to ignore the Israeli warnings and to remain in their houses and encouraged Palestinians to gather on the roofs of their homes to act as human shields;*

*Whereas on July 23, 2014, the 46-Member UN Human Rights Council passed a resolution to form a commission of inquiry over Israel's operations in Gaza that completely fails to condemn Hamas for its indiscriminate rocket attacks and its unconscionable use of human shields, with the United States being the lone dissenting vote;*

*Whereas public reports have cited the role of Iran and Syria in providing material support and training to Hamas and other terrorist groups carrying out rocket and mortar attacks from Gaza;*

*Whereas throughout the summer of 2006 conflict between the State of Israel and the terrorist organization Hezbollah, Hezbollah forces utilized innocent civilians as human shields;*

*Whereas al Qaeda, Al-Shabaab, Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and other foreign terrorist organizations typically use innocent civilians as human shields;*

*Whereas the United States and Israel have cooperated on missile defense projects, including Iron Dome, David's Sling, and the Arrow Anti-Missile System, projects designed to thwart a diverse range of threats, including short-range missiles and rockets fired by non-state actors, such as Hamas;*

*Whereas the United States provided \$460,000,000 in fiscal year 2014 for Iron Dome research, development, and production;*

*Whereas during the most recent rocket attacks from Gaza, Iron Dome successfully intercepted dozens of rockets that were launched against Israeli population centers; and*

*Whereas 5,000,000 Israelis are currently living under the threat of rocket attacks from Gaza: Now, therefore, be it*

*Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following:*

*That Congress—*

*(1) strongly condemns the use of innocent civilians as human shields;*

*(2) calls on the international community to recognize and condemn Hamas' use of human shields;*

*(3) places responsibility for the rocket attacks against Israel on Hamas and other terrorist organizations, such as Palestine Islamic Jihad;*

*(4) supports the sovereign right of the Government of Israel to defend its territory and its citizens from Hamas' rocket attacks, kidnapping attempts, and the use of tunnels and other means to carry out attacks against Israel;*

*(5) expresses condolences to the families of the innocent victims on both sides of the conflict;*

*(6) supports Palestinian civilians who reject Hamas and all forms of terrorism and violence, desiring to live in peace with their Israeli neighbors;*

*(7) supports efforts to demilitarize the Gaza Strip, removing Hamas's means to target Israel, including its use of tunnels, rockets, and other means; and*

*(8) condemns the United Nations Human Rights Council's biased resolution establishing a commission of inquiry into Israel's Gaza operations.*

*Amend the title so as to read: “A concurrent resolution denouncing the use of civilians as human shields by Hamas and other terrorist organizations.”*

Mr. ROYCE (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the amendments.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.